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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 29 Mar 52

SUBJECT New Czech AT Rocket Launcher

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE [redacted] 25X1X

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1. [redacted] about 30-35 new AT weapons of Czech manufacture were delivered to the Czech Army to be used only for training purposes. When the weapons were carried about and otherwise not in use, they were constantly covered with a tarpaulin.

2. This new AT weapon, which was observed for a period of one hour during a training class, was called "Panzerovka" (AT weapon) by everyone who was familiar with it. It had no other designation, number or name as far as is known. It is reported that it replaced the World War II German-type Panzerfaust for training purposes. It is of original Czech design and manufacture.

3. There were no identifying marks or plates on the weapon, but it is believed that it was produced at Zbrojovka Brno or Skoda-Pilsen. The weapon was not supplied to any units of the Czech Army, except for training. The number of weapons manufactured and future production plans are not known.

4. This new AT weapon would penetrate the armor of any tank in existence at the maximum effective range of 250 meters. Information on the thickness in centimeters was not given. The weapon was never observed being fired.

5. The two sights, bipod and trigger guards appeared to be roughly and crudely welded onto the weapon which indicated that the weapon was of poor quality workmanship resembling that of some Soviet weapons. The rear sight was collapsible forward. It could be released and would flip up with a spring action when a small button was pushed and would vibrate rather strongly for a few seconds when it was released. The center piece of the rear sight could be raised or lowered. On the left side of the sight there were graduations in either 50 or 100 meters. The legs of the bipod could first be brought together and pushed up a few inches into the body and then folded backwards.

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6. Less projectile, the weapon weighed approximately 7-8 kilograms. The projectile weighs approximately two kilograms.

7. The weapon is fired electromagnetically. The trigger and trigger housing was located roughly in the middle of the barrel. The rear half portion of the barrel was covered with what appeared to be a composition of a wood - asbestos type substance, light brown in color. It did not shine but was not rough. This rear half portion of the barrel was slightly smaller in diameter than the front portion with the wood-asbestos material making up the difference so that it was flush with the front half and left no uneven surfaces on the barrel of the weapon. The thickness of the wood-asbestos covering is estimated to be about 2-3 mm. No breaks in the covering material were observed which indicates it is all in one piece and fits over the barrel like a sleeve and is removable. At the extreme rear end there is a strip of metal which is apparently to hold the covering from slipping off and which is taken off by removing small screws. The screws are fastened directly into the metal of the barrel.

8. The projectile weighs approximately two kilograms and its exterior is shiny. It is loaded with a hollow charge with an additional propelling charge in the base of the stem. The hollow charge is much like that in the German Panzerfaust projectile. In firing position, the stem of the projectile fits snugly inside the barrel of the weapon with the head part of the projectile protruding and resting over the end of the barrel. The outside diameter of the barrel is estimated to be about six cm and the inside diameter to be about 4½ cm. Accordingly, the stem of the projectile is a fraction of a mm under 4½ cm due to its snug-fit inside the barrel. Also, with dimensions given, the thickness of the barrel is approximately 3/4 cm. This thickness no doubt accounts for the unusually heavy weight of this weapon, being only 80 cm long. In line with this, the weapon is considered more stationary than portable and is to be fired from a prone position only. Firing of the weapon from a kneeling position, as in the US bazooka, is out of the question.

9. The weapon had no back or forward charge when fired. This energy was zero at the center of the weapon with equal emission of the charge towards front and rear, thereby producing an even blast of energy and no effect to the operator. The barrel did not heat up, even at a high rate of fire.

10. In the TO/E of an infantry rifle company there is one of these new AT weapons per squad of men. It is not known positively but it is believed that the weapon was fired and tested at the grounds in Milovice near Prague, since all new weapons and equipment are first tested there before being supplied for training.

11. Besides the "Panzerovka", another newer model AT rocket launcher is going to become standard equipment in the Czech Army. It is called "Tarasnice". Training with this weapon was scheduled to commence the latter part of December 1951, but was postponed until March 1952 at the last moment when an unknown number of the "Tarasnice" were to be delivered for training. Training with the weapon was changed for the second time calling for tentative plans to begin in April 1952. The new Tarasnice was to be based largely on the features of the German "Panzerschrek". It was contemplated that a three-man team would operate and fire the weapon; a firer, leader and ammo bearer. It is supposed to be much more effective than the Panzerovka with a maximum effective range of 400-500 m.

12. In a planned TO/E, special AT defense units were to be attached directly to an infantry battalion headquarters; there were to be from one to two platoons equipped with six of these Tarasnice (two per squad) in support of riflemen. Details of this new TO/E have not yet been worked out and these figures are tentative and subject to change.

13. The Tarasnice is also of Czech manufacture and is also classed as a hand portable AT rocket launcher.

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ENCLOSURE (A): Sketch of the "Panzerovka", new Czech AT Rocket Launcher.

ENCLOSURE (A)

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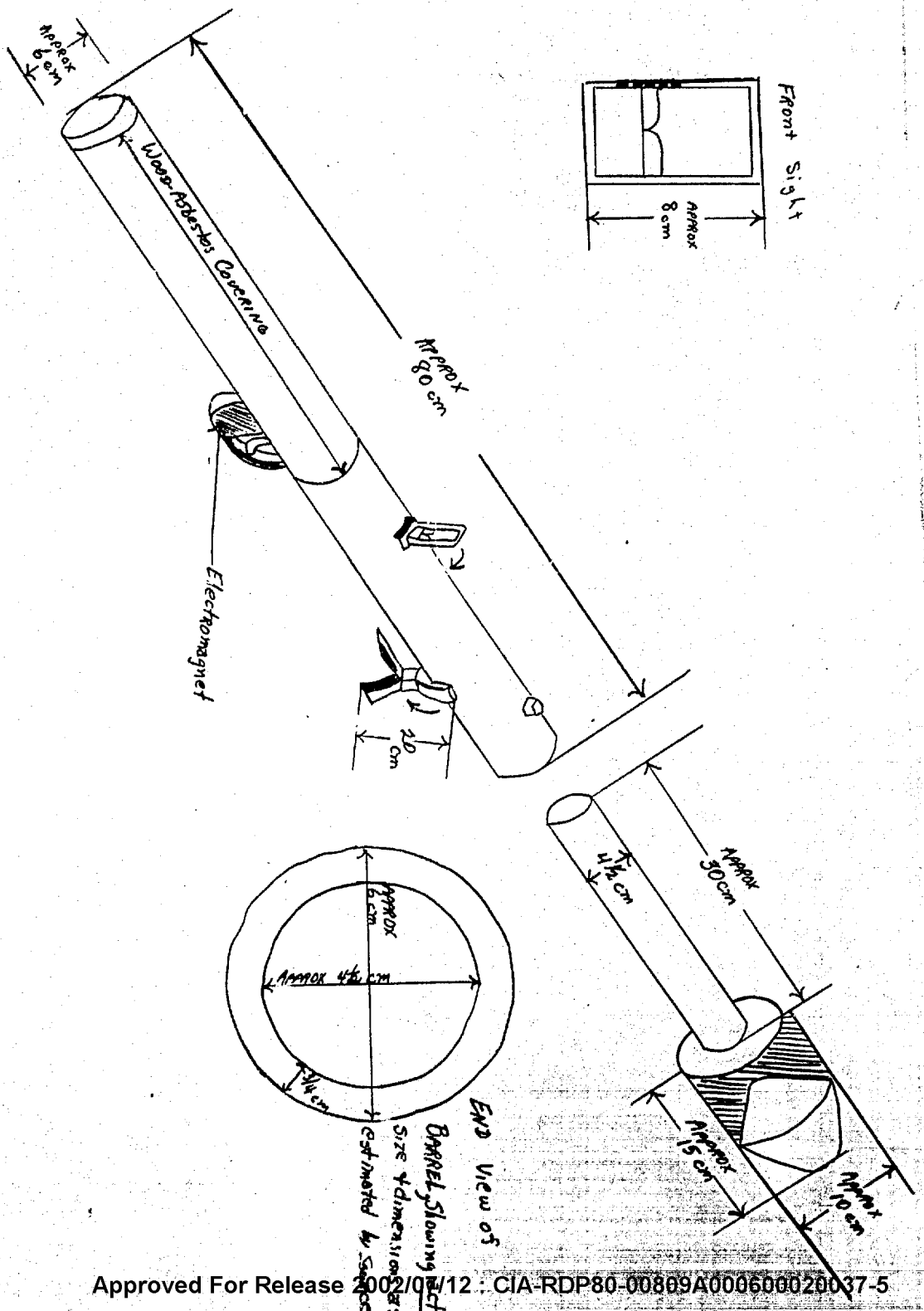
"PANCEROVKA" New Czech AT Rocket Launcher



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